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AUTHOR Walshak, Lynn G.
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ABSTRACT

This paper provides guidelines for tracing the history and implementation of United States federal legislation in government and other publications located in the library of Georgia Southern College. Sources of background information on legislation are indicated as the "Congressional Quarterly" and "Major Legislation of the Congress." Location of information on Congressional action in the "Congressional Record," "Senate Journal," House Journal," and "House Calendars" is described, as is the location of the text of proposed legislation, bills, and resolutions and the use of the "Digest of Public General Bills and Resolutions." Location and use of Congressional committee hearings, committee reports, and committee prints in such publications as the "Congressional Information Service (CIS) Annual Index," and the "Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications" is outlined as well as the location of laws in the "United States Statutes at Large," the "United States Code," and other publications. Finally location of regulations which implement these laws in the "Federal Register" (FR) and the "Code of Federal Regulations" (CFR) is described. (ESR)

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TRACING THE PASSAGE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL LEGISLATION IN GEORGIA SOUTHERN COLLEGE LIBRARY

Compiled by
Lynn G. Walshak
Government Documents Librarian
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TRACING THE PASSAGE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL LEGISLATION IN GEORGIA SOUTHERN COLLEGE LIBRARY

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United States laws are dynamic statements which can be, and frequently are, revised, amended, or eliminated. Information pertaining to congressional and executive activities in connection with laws and regulations, can be sought from several sources. Some of those sources are government publications. Studies of a law necessitates tracing its history from introduction as a bill through all congressional and presidential activities, as well as its executive implementation. The following paragraphs are intended to serve as a guide for tracing the history and implementation of federal legislation, in the Georgia Southern College Library.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Reading of general information for gaining an overall picture of a problem, should be the first step in a study of legislation. Often similar bills are introduced, from which possibly evolves a single law. All congressional activity would need to be traced. The Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report (periodical) and the Congressional Quarterly Annual (Ref JK 1 C66) are good background information sources, further aided by the Digest of Public Bills, which provides an index of identical

bills. The Almanac provides an annual summary of congressional activities. For major legislation it gives a summary of the provisions, a discussion of events leading to passage of the measure, and it may include a historical survey of previous legislation related to this particular topic. The Weekly Report often gives a more detailed discussion of events surrounding consideration of legislation and contains the most up-to-date information. However, the information is spread throughout the Weekly Report, as the events occurred, and it is more time consuming to use. Both the Almanac and the Weekly Report are well indexed. The index for the Weekly Report is published quarterly with each index being cumulative for the year.

A newer title for background information is the Congressional Research Service's Major Legislation of the Congress, May?, 1979- , (Docs.Ref. LC 14.18:), which provides a monthly summary of topical congressional issues and major legislation introduced in response to those issues. A final Summary Issue edition is published following the completion of each congress. Within each MLC, the background material and information on key legislation is identified by an issue brief number, and located through a subject table of contents, a title index, and indexes by public law or bill numbers.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

Charles J. Zinn wrote How Our Laws Are Made to help freshmen congressmen and anyone else unfamiliar with the legislative process. A copy of this document is reprinted periodically by Congress (see Serial Set 130072-2, 93rd Cong. H. Doc. 377). It gives a concise explanation of how a bill becomes a law. Included in the text are explanations of

terminology that will be important for following a bill through Congress. Also useful for this purpose are the relevant sections of Congressional Quarterly's Guide to the Congress of the United States (Ref JK 1021 C56) and Congressional Quarterly Almanac (Ref JK 1 C66).

The Congressional Record and the Senate (XJS:) and House (XJH:) Journals are major sources for tracing the history of legislation. If one is interested only in seeing a summary of the action taken by Congress, the journals are appropriate sources. However, if a record of the debate on the floor of Congress is sought, it will be necessary to use the Congressional Record.

One begins tracing the legislative history of a measure by consulting the indexes of the journals or the Congressional Record under the subject. Both the Senate and House journals have a subject index at the end of each session volume, preceded by a section "History of Bills and Resolutions." The Senate Journal subject index provides the page number where congressional action took place on the measure and/or the bill and resolution number. A bill number can then be used in the "History" section which is arranged numerically, and find the dates on which all action was taken on the measure. Information given includes committees to which the measure was referred, report numbers, names of sponsors, and public law numbers. The House Journal "History" section provides page numbers where congressional action is discussed, and other information similar to the Senate Journal.

The Congressional Record index volume for each session of congress contains a subject index (including personal names) and a "History of Bills and Resolutions," with Senate and House bills listed separately.There is

also a list of bills enacted into law. The "History" section provides information similar to the Senate and House journals. Voting action on all measures can be learned in the Record as well as in both journals. Each subject index can be consulted under YEA AND NAY VOTES.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, daily edition.

The House and Senate journals are not published until after the session is ended, thus are not available for studying current activities on measures. The daily edition of the Congressional Record may be used for this purpose. It is indexed bi-weekly; however, the index is not cumulative and can be time-consuming to use.

CALENDARS OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND HISTORY OF LEGISLATION

The daily House Calendars (Y1.2/2:) is an excellent source for tracing the history of current legislation. Each issue gives a cumulative listing by bill or resolution number of all congressional action on measures considered during each congress. However, only bills which have been reported by the committees and acted upon by either or both of the Houses (except Senate resolution not of interest to the House), and special House reports, are listed. Each Monday issue contains a subject index.

BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

The text of proposed legislation, bills and resolutions, may be consulted in microfiche format (Y 1.). An index, or FINDING AID, cumulates periodically during each congress and session for the microfiche, with a final, permanent edition for each session. The fiche are separated into nine distinct groups--Senate bills; Senate resolutions; House of Representative

bills; etc.--thus the Finding Aid is also divided into the same nine distinct groups. Individual bill or resolution numbers are listed in each section of the Finding Aid with its X-Y grid coordinate number for location on the fiche.

Texts of proposed legislation of earlier congresses can often be located in related hearings and in some instances in the Congressional Record. Committee Reports contain texts of bills. See paragraph on Committee Reports for information on how to locate such reports. Also, consult West's U. S. Code & Administrative News (KF 48 A3) for the text of each bill that became law.

DIGEST OF PUBLIC BILLS

The Digest of Public General Bills and Resolutions (LC 14.6:) furnishes, in summary form, the essential features of public bills and resolutions made during the legislative process. It indicates committee and floor action, names sponsors, includes identical bill, short title, and subject indexes. The Digest frequency has varied, but presently is published during each session of a Congress in two cumulative issues with occasional supplements and a final edition at the conclusion of the session.

Each cumulative issue is divided into three parts: 1. Action Taken During the Congress, including first session action in second session publications, is in two sections, "Public Laws" and "Other Measures Receiving Action." The "Public Laws" section digests each law in numerical order of enactment, provides legislative histories, a cross-index of public laws, and originating legislation. The "Other Measures..." section numerically lists the latest revised digests, with histories, and other pertinent information when appropriate. 2. Digests of Public General Bills and Resolutions, by type

of bill or resolution, and 3. Indexes to Digested Bills and Resolutions. There are four index approaches in this section: sponsor and cosponsor; identical bills, short title, and subject.

Each supplement contains the digests, or bill titles when appropriate, of bills introduced since the previous cumulative issue or supplement, and a subject index.

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Committee hearings contain transcripts of conversations in hearings, many of which hearings are published and can be located by checking the Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications located next to the Documents Office. Also useful for locating the existence of hearings are the various indexes of congressional committee hearings, such as Halsey's Index of Congressional Committee Hearings and its supplements, (shelved next to Documents Office). Each volume indexes hearings by subject, committee, and bill or resolution number. The CIS Annual Index, 1970- , provides comprehensive indexing for all congressional activities, including hearings, giving all information needed for locating the documents in our collection. CIS Annual Index is shelved next to the Documents Office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

After a committee has completed hearings on issues under study, the matter is returned to Congress accompanied by a report with the Committee's conclusions and recommendations. These report numbers are listed in the Congressional Record Index, indexes of the House and Senate journals, daily House Calendars, and part one of the Digest of Public Bills.

Reports are indexed by subject in the Monthly Catalog as well as the CIS Annual. Committee Reports for the 95th Congress are available in "slip" form, shelved in Documents in numerical order. Reports for the 96th Congress are in microfiche format, but also retrievable by number. Beginning with the 97th Congress, the microfiche were assigned a classification number (Y 1.1). Within that classification number, the reports are retrievable by number from the appropriate sections, i.e. Senate Report, House Report.

Earlier reports may be found in the congressional Serial Set which is shelved in documents by serial volume number. Beginning with the 97th Congress, the Serial Set is available only in the microfiche format under the Y 1.1 classification number. In the microfiche format, reports will remain in strict numerical order. This is not the case with the earlier hardcopy volumes. The reports are not in strict numerical order; thus it is necessary to check the Checklist of U. S. Public Documents, 1789-1909, the Documents Catalog, or the Numerical List and Schedule of Volumes (all shelved next to Documents Office), depending upon the time period involved, to determine the serial set volume in which a particular report falls. Another valuable tool is the CIS U. S. Serial Set Index to help locate desired reports. The Serial Set Index covers the period 1789 to 1969, 91st Congress. West's U. S. Code and Administrative News (KF 48 A3) can also be used to locate copies of reports, as well as the more specialized Internal Revenue Cumulative Bulletin, which includes those laws and congressional reports that pertain to revenues.

COMMITTEE PRINTS

In previous years, Committee Prints, which often contain some of the most valuable research available relating to proposed legislation, were frequently regarded by committees to be purely of internal value. They were thus not distributed. Currently, the tendency is to provide these publications to the public, and they can be located through the Monthly Catalog and the CIS Annual Index.

LAWS

Once a measure has passed Congress, and been signed by the President, it is issued first in "slip law" form. These slip laws are shelved in the Documents Office, arranged by public-law number. At the end of each session of Congress, a bound volume of the laws passed, the United States Statutes at Large, is issued. However, there has typically been a considerable time lag before the bound volume appears. The laws therein are arranged by public law number and there is a subject index at the end of the volume. Both the Statutes and the CIS Annual give a legislative history for each bill or resolution which became law during the year covered. The CIS Annual history is the best coverage, and includes references to debates contained in the Congressional Record as well as to committee hearings and prints. The U. S. Code and Administrative News provides the text of a law most currently in bound volumes, as it is published monthly, then superceded by permanent volumes.

Some measures passed by the Congress are vetoed by the President. The compilation Presidential Vetoes, 1789-1976, (Docs. Ref. Y 1.3:V 64/2/789-976) sets out in numerical order, a summary of all bills that were vetoed for a period of one hundred eighty seven years.

U. S. CODE

All laws which govern like subject matter are grouped, or codified, into fifty broad subject categories referred to as titles. These titles are further divided into chapters and sections. The U. S. Code, containing the codification of all federal laws currently in effect, is the official publication of our laws. The Code, a new edition of which is issued every six years, has a subject index, an index of popular names of acts, and a table index which correlates by public-law numbers, all laws of each Congress as they appear in the Statutes at Large, with the title, chapter, and section number of the U. S. Code. The Code is updated by an annual, cumulated supplement.

A very useful leaflet, How to Find U. S. Statutes and U. S. Code Citations, 1980 edition, (Docs. Ref. GS 4.102:St 2/980) sets out in chart format the various basic finding aids to use, when you have various reference beginning information, i.e. date of law; name of law; number of law, etc.

EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS

Congressional legislation specifies which executive agency or agencies are responsible for promulgating regulations to implement the laws passed by Congress. Notices of proposed regulations, and the text of final regulations, are published daily, Monday through Friday in the Federal Register, with the annual codification in the U. S. Code of Federal Regulations. Indexes of the FR are cumulated periodically throughout the year, with a final annual index at the end of each calendar year. The subject index is best approached by looking first under the agency responsible for implementing the law in question, and then under the subject of the law.

Regulations published in the Federal Register, are codified in a companion publication, the Code of Federal Regulations. Like the U. S. Code, it is arranged in fifty titles, further divided into chapters and sections. The titles of the CFR are revised annually. Superceded volumes are discarded, with the exception of title 3. Title 3 contains Presidential proclamations and executive orders that are cumulated and issued in permanent bound volumes. The subject index of the CFR refers readers to title and section of the CFR. The Codification of Presidential Proclamations and Executive Orders, Jan. 20, 1961-Jan. 20, 1981, (Docs. Ref. GS 4.113/3:961-81) provides in one source a cumulation of proclamations and orders during the period of time covered, including any amendments thereto with citations to basic documents. This Codification is divided into fifty chapters, representing broad subject matter similar to the title designations of the CFR and the U. S. Code. There are a subject index, tables which indicate the disposition or amendment of proclamations and orders, and a section illustrating Presidential seals and awards.